

PS3545

.A9 J4

1918

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 018 395 553 6



PS 3545

.A9 J4

1918

Copy 1

Carl H. Stanger
September 11-1918 Chester.
VAH, GOD OF BATTLES
UP TO DATE

THE GERMAN GOD

By

HARVEY M. WATTS, A.M., Litt.D.

*Author of "The Wife of Potiphar, with other Poems,"
"The Faith of Princes," "Pennsylvania," "Luz
Erat," Member of the Vigilantes, etc., etc.*



1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

PHILADELPHIA
THE JOHN C. WINSTON COMPANY
1918

PS354E
A7J4
H18

Copyright, 1918, by
HARVEY M. WATTS



©CL.A512902

APR -3 1919

To the Memory of
SECOND LIEUTENANT WILMER E. HERR
*of the American Expeditionary Force in France,
one of the first to fall in Lorraine, April 8, 1918,
in an effort to save the world from the terrorism
of the Imperial monster herein depicted.*



JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

A SATIRE

Soliloquy by William II on the eve of Palm Sunday, 1918.

Scene—The Cabinet de Travail in the Palace at Potsdam.

The Kaiser is looking out at the window over the park which darkens under the spring twilight. By his side, on a small table, lies an antique sword, Roman, with straight T-shaped handle, and a large Bible with many slips of crimson ribbon inserted in its pages to indicate certain books and texts upon which he has requested memoranda from the Imperial Chaplains and Pastors in order to pick out the text for the victory sermon.

Through the closed doors of the Cabinet come, at times, the faint tones of a piano on which some attaches of the Palace are playing. Fragments from the Nibelungen music drama are heard and particularly the "Song of the Sword" from Siegfried. As the Kaiser's ear catches the Sword Motif he takes his hand from the Bible which he was about to open, beats time on the window pane with his finger and exclaims:

Jah, "Nothung, Nothung, neidliches Schwert," indeed!
Jah, "Todt lagst du in Trummern dort," too long!
But now this blade, the German sword's alive,
Its motif sounds through all the quickened earth,
Its long-time forging true was not in vain.
The Master never wrote a better line;
Nor more prophetic, though most ears were dull
And eyes were blind to what it signified.
From Rheingold to the final score the call
Thrills every soul who knows his race and name;
The German folk, whose ways were e'er of peace,
Yet, trained by me, know how to go to war;
Sons of the sword, Lords of the flashing blade,
"Die Falschen" shattered as by Siegfried's might,
As France, wild for revenge, lured by the lies,
The lies of Albion, is spent at last,
Snared and betrayed by friends as false as weak,
Whose punishment, delayed, is certain, sure,
As "hands across the sea" stretch empty,
The gestures, like the words, full impotent;
Since time fights with and for us to the last.
Our dice are loaded with the weight of men,
Our heavier battallions, winners all,
Whose triumph, vict'ry, all must now confess.

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

Nor wrought the folk, nor swung they sword, in vain;
And so in forge, on farm and battlefront
We have secured and kept our heritage.
Facing the rising sun, we seek our place
And shall not be denied our lot therein;
Since, lo, we celebrate deeds uncompar'd,
Success beyond all seeming chance and range
Of human prowess, irresistible;
More than we hoped for was predestinate,
As if ripe fruit, or rotten, fell by winds
Sent by our God who smiles upon our cause,
The end made to our hands and by them too.
While we prepare to deems for our hosts,
Our enemies repeat trisagions,
Their kyries our triumph-lies in fact,
The Dies irae of a world in flames.
But not the "saeculum in favilla" yet;
Since I, protector, not the wrathful judge,
Will save the remnant through our glorious peace;
Our peace, not theirs, for so the world is bound—
And bound, must look to us to heal its wounds,
Must seek the balm of our own Gilead,
That, as of old, awaits my royal touch.
And whom I heal, and whom I shall pass by,
Is all as I elect and God decrees.
But, as I stand the victor, all is plain;
My task is but begun; like husbandman,
With cunning hands upon the worn-out stock
Of ancient cultures, opposites, I'll graft
Our own and let the world bear German fruit,
What'er its origins or race intent.
They well may bend in bough as twig's inclined,
And I'll reset as well as find the twig
And fix the inclination at my will.
If they hold back I'll crush the brood of hate
With no more twinges than the gardener knows,
Who, booted, stalks along the sanded path,
And treads the myriad ants which idly swarm,
A realm in petto, ground beneath his heel!
And so with me the larger purposes,
My own and God's, control. Those who oppose
Bring their own ruin as in Belgium
Whose sheer Unfähigkeit in time of stress
Deprived it of its separate estate;

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

And dark Armenia whose hidden plots,
Born of old schisms, ancient heresies,
Fanatic stubbornness, have doomed it quite;
And Serbia strutting, when it should have crept
Before us humbly, tripped and fell full prone.
The stiff-necked ever thus invite their fate,
And stumbling bring the world about their ears.

I willed this not, nor planned a world at war,
But those of Islam, men who walk with God,
If not in our own way at least in theirs—
How well they walk is lesson to us all—
With vision, say 'tis "Kismet!" And, of truth,
Since God reveals His hand in history,
Gracious to those who know His mind and way,
As says the Koran, there is fixed a term
To every Nation and the issue's joined.
When it is passed, no respite, all is o'er;
Chance knocks upon the Door of Life but once!
The lightsome never hear the knock nor ope,
The feeble beat upon the bolts in vain.
So pass my enemies whose term is up,
As I seize all as ready legatee.
Prepared, all things escheat as if by rote.
Unreadiness is its own punishment
As they well know who cry in pain "too late,"
Finding us masters where they idly ruled.
Nor waste we time o'er their deep miseries;
For weaklings jeopardize all sovereignty;
The chain sums up the weakest link in strength.
But laggard nations, which are out of pace,
Shall never clog nor stop our chariot wheels,
Nor shall they halt the progress of the world,
Their fell disease calls loudly for the knife,
Lest it contaminate the healthy flesh,
And, like contagion, spread beyond control.
Cruel in deed, am I, but kind in fact,
And know the stroke that cleaves and likewise cleans,
Which, multiplied in war's enmillioned might,
Saves by its very menace, since, disguised,
War is the benison for us, for all,
The double blessing to a nation torn;
New valors blossom in the humblest heart,
New virtues spring where once was selfishness,

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

And all the folk at one in sacred cause,
Sloughing their sins as if confessed of God,
Are shrived as though before the judgment seat.
For lo, while Europe, slothful, lay asleep,
I saw the fiery dragon in the sky,
More fearsome than a Fafner in the toils,
The Yellow Peril, and opposed my might,
Mailed as to fist, and armed from top to toe,
Jehovah's sword am I and double-edged.
Woe, woe to them who stand athwart my path.
Our Etzel my exemplar to the end,
In Attila I saw myself forecast,
Flagella peccatorum, as our Lord,
And instrument devoted in his hands;
A scourge of God in fact as well as fame,
But, like the fire, a cauter and a cure!

So I have fought the fight and kept the faith
E'en as my allies, quick of ear and hand,
Who keep with me the sacred word and strive
Under the banner of the Caliphate.
Pawns in my play who move as I direct.
This is the law of Nations and of right,
The "must" and "ought" of Kant's imperative,
The category of the ruling mind,
That keeps the conscience and the State as one.
This is the inspiration of success,
The cause and conduct of a war most just.
Nations no less than Nature must obey
The universal rule that seeks the fit
And arms them with the right divine to live,
Surviving while their enemies are crushed.
Darwin is ours! his law we have applied
As law of action, superseding cults,
Since war selects unerringly its own
While some are raised to honor, victis vae!
Treitschke foresaw, foretold, forewarned them all
In open prophecy, the day of days;
And force and frightfulness the direful means;
Direful for those who sat with folded hands
As we prepared the nation to a man
And gave the countersign of hope to all;
Strike without mercy, slay without a trace.
Our knights whose cloak is white if cross be black—

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

The omen is propitious to our cause—
For ever set their seal upon our way;
The olden way that suits our cause today.
And stand the model of our conquering hosts.
Who have, in newer Tannenberg, redeemed
Their marshes, soaked with blood expiator
Of those who set our feet upon the path
Of empire through the sure Teutonic soul,
Strengthening the stroke of surer Teuton sword,
Time's long-delayed requital found at last;
Lex talionis, law of tooth and claw,
None left with eyes but those that weep their fate!

Wagner was right, the sword is over all.
And would a greater might arise to set
A newer scoring for this flashing steel
Our own Excalibur, a sacred sign!
Our "In hoc signo vinces," by the sword,
And not the cross as Constantine averred,
Who, wearied, saw, on high in Rhenish lands,
His haloed labarum in blazing sky;
In terror of the omen, full distraught,
Grasped at the shadow and misread the sign.
For, hold the blade with handle upright, so,
The chorus does it very well in "Faust,"
And e'er the blood-wet weapon turns a cross.
But still for that it is the blade that wins
So we reverse the omen to our gain.
In signo hoc—Yea, they who only know
The little arc of their own destiny,
Nor saw the greater circle which I scanned,
Have brought this ruin on themselves, the fools!
They read the story but to miss the point,
We make the past convenient stepping stones,
Or fingerposts that point the only way,
Or charted seas with all shoals indicate.
And I in Russia have applied the hint
And made their present debtor to our past.
As Friedrich knew that Poland could not live
Save as a vassal of a greater line,
Since all things whirl inexorably by law,
Each center with attendant satellites,
Quiring in harmony and lasting peace,
As once proud Rome, the golden hub, controlled

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

All destinies. Gained not by single stroke,
As when Caligula—to me ein Narr—
Wished that his enemies had but one neck,
But surely, each in turn, till all were won.
"Divide and conquer," 'twas the ancient aim,
Which we apply in quintessential force,
As fortune shows the way and eke the means,
Before the Caesars glorified the rule.
Inheritors of all their greater lore,
Roman in all but name, we take our own.
And take it first; by that the game is won.
Enslaved by me, the conquered do our tasks.
I leave to them their self-determined way
So long as they promote the end desired;
The end that justifies our every deed.
Nor quarrel I o'er means that get results;
Since war is war, why count the units lost?
The mass is all that matters in the main,
As eggs are broken in the omelet!
For omnia prona victoribus was writ
Of England conquered and full bound in chains.
Victors the world will grovel at your feet
Where conquered you accept their jibes and gyves.
"Auferre, trucidare, rapere,"
Says Tacitus of Britain's ancient woes.
"Yes, rape and rapine," so his venom runs,
"Misnamed as Empire overcame the world."
With appetite beyond the chance to glut,
Since "Quos non Oriens, non Occidens
Et satiaverit," they quote at me.
"With equal avid wish, abundance, want
The rich, the poor they coveted and seized."
And yet, and yet, their bounds, periphery,
The urbs et orbis, circle of the lands,
Spite of the slanders, words of British hate,
Where'er the conqueror went were blessed with peace;
That Pax Romana that redeemed the earth,
As now that peace that comes alone through me,
My peace to which I'll dedicate a shrine—
Our Ara Pacis more imperial
Than that Augustus raised with easy fame,
Rome's latest wonder, pigmy though to mine
As Leipzig's monument forecasts in bulk—
And glorify as Pax, Pax Candida,

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

Shining fore'er as Pax Germanica!
They whine o'er this and cry "Atrocities!"
And scream o'er women plotters, rightly slain,
Of loose-lived soldiers by us crucified;
A warning seen but once not soon forgot,
And quote the massacre of innocents.
Well, Herod is traduced through lying text;
The Matthew Gospel stands in this impure.
Then, as of me, they spread the cunning tale,
Maligned the Imperial dignity and power,
Imputed evils that their mind evoked.
But if it were necessity, all's well!
I join the tetrarch, nor condemn the act
When it is done for purposes of State;
Women and children first, lest they should prove
Impedimenta that might block our way,
Since infants make a ready blind for men,
And tottering peasants screen an ambuscade.
So let them prattle of our blood and iron;
And I will answer with the roar of guns.
My Empire is the cannon's farthest range,
Its limits marked alone by force of arms,
Where flies the flag o'er the sea, where tread my troops,
This is my challenge flung both far and wide.
No bounds of Hercules in narrowed strait
Confine us to the seas as known of old.
The Baltic and the Middle Seas our own,
The ocean turned into a German lake.
This is "Der Tag" we toasted to the skies,
And this expansion is but Nature's law,
And its accomplishment a holy cause,
Our Jihad, dear to me and all my line,
Since our green banner bears the one device,
As supermen the supramundum cry;
The Fatherland o'er all, o'er all the world.

Victor abroad, at home my will is law
In court and temple, fane and synagogue,
Semite and anti-Semite do my will,
And all the Christian faiths hang on my word.
No bleak Canossa lies before my path,
The Vatican's decrees sing small indeed,
They talk of "peace," "impartiality";
Ah, c'est-a-rire, indeed, they know my thought;

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

These non-cathedra murmurings are vain,
Mere tinkling brass, solemn but empty sound.
My sanction supersedes their canon law,
Their "imprimatur" is my manual,
The text is theirs, the inspiration mine.
They know a Fontainebleau awaits them all,
So they dissemble, and, with feeble show
Of power, "thunder in the indices."
Our Cardinals, 'tis true, have all the port
And ancient pomp of princes of the realm.
He of Cologne is Bourbon to the hat,
As arrogant as Hildebrand himself,
But Hildebrand in exile knew the day
Of disillusion and of shattered hopes,
The punishment for pride that rode to fall.
And Munich stands the censor of belief,
Would cloak the civil in the prelate's robe,
They know not Luther, Reuchlin is forgot,
Erasmus as if not, but we shall see.
A newer Kultur-kampf may ope their eyes
When backed by bombs and zeppelins in flight;
The Sistine knows the calibres of guns,
For dogma yields to lay majorities,
And they to force, and so the circle's run.
Yet they extend my person and my power
Since all must bow before me and obey.
The Jews, too, ever ingrates, are of use
In race apart they know no Nation's heart,
Exiled, "dispersed" from far Judean soil,
They like Antaeus out of touch with earth,
Have lost their fighting spirit once their wont
And find their "Promised Land" in lanes of trade,
The "milk and honey" in the interest rate.
Unstable as a woman's whims they cower,
But garner where our steel has reaped the grain.
Their bankers cried that they "would have no war."
Poof, poof, like thistledown before the gale their weight
When war broke out and boundaries disappeared,
And credit, like the laws, or stood or fell
As arms determined and the battle's gage.
I'll teach them what the Ghetto really means,
I'll have the synagogues reform their ways,
And quote the prophets to sustain my throne.
And new phylacteries shall spell my wish,

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

Instead of mumbo-jumbo for a text
Mere amulets of Bedouins at the best.
If they plot anarchy as is the wont
Of kith and kin in Russia, vermin all,
They'll face a Pale from Posen to the sea
And know the clink of something else than gold.
But I full know their cultus helps my cause,
Just as the Suras are a mine of wealth
Of racial law, domestic wisdom too
Since all the East is wise in its own way.
And we may profit while we hold our own
Compelling tribute to the State's one aim,
Its strength in numbers knowing but our will.
But this is vain if numbers melt away
Before the stress of war without recoup.
And men and women turn to epicenes—
Forgetting "Male and female made He them"
Like to the birds in air, the beasts in field
Nor spoiled by manners of the close or cage—
As pundits quarrel over customs, means,
And crown virginity with claustral phrase,
And empty cradles menace e'en the throne;
Man-strength is but the babe-in-arms of age!
The Talmud, in the face of facts, allows
The long familiar habit of the folk,
Yet sets no seal, no more than Islam does,
Of prim approval on the equal bond
Of man and mate, since need must e'er decide
The moral obligations of the State.
And I decide what custom must approve;
The State's summed up in me and fixed in mine!
And in this crisis, lo, our course is clear,
One duty falls with equal force on all.
As war upsets the olden rule of life,
The law, command divine, "Increase and multiply";
The cornerstone by God, ordained of old,
Should be for us a potent lease of power.
Mahomet proved the seer in this, nor stood
Upon lax preachments; yet, we, weak, recoil,
E'en though the Mormon State has proved anew
That chastity is but the soul's intent.
The home is oft the harem, thin disguised,
And childless, loveless, too, a hollow sham,
So out upon this cheap hypocrisy

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

And let us take the lesson to our hearts,
Find never virtue in new sacrifice.
Let women ne'er forget their "rule of three,"
Church, chores and children, sole and only aim,
And make the family, as of old, the fount
And firm foundation of a lasting State.
Nor hazard future years by false ideas.
The people at their best, our brawn and brain,
Are but the shadow of my competence.
And I will shape them to our signal ends.

I stand upon the pinnacle of fame,
A new Assyria rises into view.
Austria, my vassal, at my beck and call,
With kings and princes as my satrapies,
For Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne,
Ne'er knew such triumphs as are ours by arms.
For lo, as from a lofty mountain height
The Kingdoms of the world laid out in plan,
Reticulate as if from 'plane in flight,
Are spread as feast before my searching eyes,
Which catch a glory of the Greater East
Reflecting glory of the Greater West.
The Orient was ever in my dreams,
Its plains have ever held my deep desires,
Its hills my ardent hopes, where old and new
Meet on the shining way that leads at last
Past Bagdad to the seas that wash the Ind
Under the yellow moon of Schahriar,
Beneath the rose tree where old Omar sleeps,
And through the fastnesses of Afghan gorge.
With Delitsch I have lived the lives of old,
Restored in splendor Asshurbanipal,
Symbol of all my plans of empyr,
Spawned in the East, perfected in the West.
A second Constantine, I, on the Rhine,
Which, safely German, laves its banks in peace,
No longer subject to Ovidian sneers,
The "Rhenus squalidus" 'midst "broken reeds,"
Shall, lo, evoke the West that is our East
And East that's West as our own leaven works.
Russia my footstool, washpot, too, in fact,
The Euxine held by us in simple fee,
The Golden Horn, a bauble in our hands,

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

The Drang nach Osten realized at last;
Where we may bask and stretch ourselves at ease,
Yes, in the sun at his meridian height.
For I have trod the Holy Land and gazed
In silence on grey-walled Gethsemane,
And, from on high, on sloping Olivet,
Saw mine own tower o'er Jerusalem,
Triumphant rising in the Muristan;
Above all domes and minarets supreme,
Supreme o'er David's tower and battlements;
A prophecy of my intent and will.
And had they read it better for them all.
For more was broken down than olden walls
And parapets of Solymein the Great,
When, through the breach that looks toward Joppa, I,
Acclaimed by all, came in a Paladin,
In shining panoply in knightly guise,
A second Barbarossa, aye, in state,
And shared the privileges oft denied
The great in dim and inner secret shrines.
Had I but gone to Mecca, Ah, in truth,
Arabia at my feet, the desert bound
In fealty of faith to my own whims,
Would follow, camel-wise, where'er I led.
I'll have a fetva yet, for what are creeds
To those who tread the higher ways of life—
And King and Kaiser, I'll be Caliph too;
Lord of all Asia and the whirling globe.

A newer Petrus, I; I, too, have seen
The vision of the heavenly sheet let down
And know the meaning of the clear command
"Consider nothing common or unclean!"
We Germans know our destiny, our fate,
Our learning is for all a tonic draft
Of living waters from the sacred rock,
A panacea seen by Malachi,
That Sun of Righteousness whose radiant beams
Light up the earth with glory all its own.
Through me the synthesis of all belief,
The universal solvent, Alcahest,
Philosophy with all its dross expurged,
Becomes the touchstone of my people's weal.

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

For gods are made in man's own image, aye,
And badly made at that in foolishness,
As all the deities invent, attest.
Chemosh and Marduk, Moloch all are one
Squabbling like vultures o'er the carrion fields
Of war, and eager for the praise of men;
The praise of men who cry them, "Victors all!"
These be the gods of old, e'en Israel's—
Jahveh is Judah 'tween the cherubim,
While "Allah" is but Arab written large.
The desert spawns its prophets as the sand
Yields up the incense-bearing shrubbery.
The elders walk with God, the young cry out
Their burning visions to the passers-by;
The very "res angustae" give them point.
When gaunt of body, lo, the soul expands,
And, starved at home, they spread their truths abroad,
For logothetes were early in the field
In Babylon as at Byzantium.
But I would strike the balance with them all.
Combine the logos with the blade that cures.
But for the sword, Mohammed might have mused
Upon the Meccan housetops all in vain,
Hailed as a babbler, dreamer of vain dreams,
And jeered and hooted in the market place.
But, lo, when from Medina swept his horde,
Fire in their eye and fury in their heart,
Who neither asked, nor quarter gave, in sooth,
The Empire rose again in the Eastern lands,
And Allah and his prophet claimed their due.
And like Jehovah, or the earlier line
Of village deities, the parish bonds
Were burst asunder by the feat of arms,
And lo, dominion came with sword and book,
And book proved by the sword became the law.
As our Kultur is now before the world.
For, in the melting-pot, faiths equalize;
And so with Islam mine, our Lord still shrined,
Yet I am not unmindful of our own,
The ancient runes of wood-folk, hero-bred,
Who know the fetish and its magic power;
The Bismarck "turms" upon the ancient heights,
Druidic altars of the empire's birth,

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

Like Baal-fires kindled as 'a warning sign;
Or, lo, as Mars, the giant Hindenburg,
Colossal idol of the people's hopes,
Studded with golden nails, a new taboo
Our procul, procul, O, profani, Ah,
The Ur-mind harking to its olden call.
An avatar of ancient ruthlessness,
An Ariovistus in the flesh once more,
But lo, a chief whom fortune never falls—
The jade does ever favor those who seize
Her by the scruff, deaf to all niceties—
Thus we improve the breed and sturdy stock,
React to all the heart-pull of the race.
And, as the Valkyrs sweep the darkening sky,
Our Wotan, Thor and Loki rise in sight
Our Northern forbears, yes, our three in one,
Their contradictions all resolved by me,
Et deum inveniam aut faciam,
I'll find a god or make one to my taste—
Since by my right on earth, vice regent, I,
In essence Godlike in my Majesty
Summus episcopus, I, thus declare
This thing amalgamate from Holy Writ,
Disjecta membra of the old beliefs,
Welded be me, as Slegmund's broken sharde
Into the tempered blade that nought withstood.
The Norseland sagas, Islam's litanies,
Lore of the East and wisdom of the West,
Jehovah, God of Battles, up to date,
Improved by me in world-compelling cult,
Once tribal now shall dominate the earth:—
Judea's hilltop Lord, the German God,
Der alte Gott der Deutschen und der Welt,
But ruling not alone, aye, not alone!

The Kaiser turns abruptly, picks up the Bible and begins to finger the different marked places, his eye lighting up as he notes the familiar and favorite texts and, carefully readjusting certain of the markers, he continues his musing:

They ask me to select the victory text.
Aye, they do well—It must be done with care,
With full regard to our dynastic claims

EHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

And what this people mean before the world.
I will not have a war of petty creeds
Splitting thin hairs of doctrine in my cause.
In this great moment of the Empire's life,
One thought, one mind, one heart, one hope is ours,
The pulpit may embellish, give its gloss,
And suit the language to its auditors,
Simple or high and rich or poor or great,
Small is the difference so they follow me;
As ships lie moored at anchorage and veer
And float this way and that as shifts the tide,
But ever steadfast to the hidden chains
That keep them in the channel and the course,
So I would hold all anchored to my will
And to the word that justifies our cause.
To fix the mob-mind is a care of State.
And these the shepherds of the flock should learn
How best to drive and what the path shall be.
I'll have the rectors work the problem out
And let the pastors echo my ideas,
With each professor prophesying too.
The text, from Old or New, it matters not,
Save that the message ring out loud and clear
With due respect to what the sword has won
These are the compass points of my concern,
The North and South of all my policy.
No Caesar, pontifex as well as dux,
E'er saw a world so helpless at his feet.
My apotheosis at last is nigh;
The auguries must be manipulate,
The signs uphold me in my deep designs.
I'll brook no play of empty phrase to prove
Some fond perversion of plans foreordained.
No; nothing left to chance lest feeble wits,
Whose hearts are not much softer than their heads,
Should seek with muddled vision to confuse
The growing testament that vindicates
Our every deed—The Law, the Prophets, too,
The Gospel and Epistles, word for word,
Whose myriad texts like clouds of witnesses
Yield richest savor, incense for our cause
Interpreted by rubrics all mine own.
So those who cry of "ploughshares, pruning hooks,"

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

Like children playing on the cliff edge stand
In slippery places menaced by my wrath.
For I will none of this; hew to the line,
Stand by your guns exult and magnify!
E'en Jesus, who is Joshua new spelled—
A Joshua too much compassionate
Whose views are not in full accord with mine,
Yet hath He said, "To Caesar render all
Of tribute that is his and eke to God
The measure that is His in equal part."
So thus he recognized the state supreme—
They would misquote. And yet He counsels war—
Bernhardi notes it in his argument—
Cries out, "I come not here to send you peace,
But lo, a sword, as is my father's wish."
He knew his mission as do I know mine.
But as the clangors of the bells succeed
The diapason of the battlefields,
I fain would quote the elder texts that breathe
The throb and threat of men in bloody shock;
Texts filled with wrath divine that seeks no peace:—
"Their youth shall die, no remnant shall be left,
The men of Anathoth shall know our God,
The Lord of Hosts, and die there by His sword."
So Jeremiah strikes the tonic key,
And with him is Ezekiel, whose words
Roll out and on as distant sound of drums,
Bold hymns of conquest and of hearty hate.
They sing the old song of the sword, not new,
As, lo, it slaked its thirst in thousands slain
As God reached down among Judean hills,
And cities fell, their smoke a cloud by day
And fiery pillar in the purple night.
Why palter we, or falter, when we read
The adjuration all so plainly writ:
Exult with these of old who slew and sang,
And sang just as they slew, as we do now.
But no one text can satisfy today.
I would a chorus sang in sweeping tones,
The words of Deborah in ecstasy;
Or with the timbrel followed Miriam's song,
For she rejoiced in Pharaoh's hosts o'erwhelmed
And knew her God was lord of those who fight.
Yea, shout aloud so that the world may hear

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

Strange that the Pastoral, the Twenty-third,
That "babbles of green fields" and quiet pools,
Of shepherds gently guarding tender sheep,
Should preface such a vision of my might.
For what is this? "Lift up your heads, ye gates,
Be lifted up, ye everlasting doors,
Be lifted that the King"—aye, what a line!—
"The King of Glory may come in in pomp.
Who is the King of Glory?" How it stire!
"The Lord of Hosts, of Sabaoth, is King,"
Indeed my king fore'er, and, as I read,
I see myself in cavalcade sweep through
The Brandenburger gate while all cry out
"Our King of Glory is come in!" Or, more,
In that great dream of dreams, when 'neath the Arch,
The Arch of Triumph, with its chains removed,
I stride, the Master, "Lift your heads, ye gates!
And be ye lifted, everlasting doors."
The crowd should cry aloud as if compelled
By awe of me, the All-highest, as they see
The princes join in homage as I pass.

And now the day of Palms, the day of days,
Is here at last, the day long prophesied.
And as I hear the text, "Hosannah, hail,"
The words ring in my ears as bells of joy,
My accolade from those who know my rights,
"Hosannah, blest the King of Israel,
Who cometh in the name of God Himself."
So John narrates the moving scene of old.
I read it with the inner light and see
Myself in triumph midst the palms, the world,
Remade by me, its ruler, at my feet.
"For, lo, they went before, bearing the palms."
Yes, palmam qui meruit, who more than I?
Ah, that my star combine the Easter burst
Of splendor, and this charnel house of war
Become the open tomb of newer life,
Ne'er sensed by man and known to God alone.
Of newer life and opportunities
But to the text, that is my great concern;
Upon its aptness hangs a new success.
The Prophets speak of unrelenting hate
Of those who knew the sword, and, humbled, find

Themselves a portion for the foxes, Ah,
"Defile the house and fill the courts with slain,
And multiply them in the streets at will,
The terror of the sword let loose without,
And pestilence within and famine dire,"
"Let Midianites as one be safely slain;
Because the Lord is with those who pursue
The sword of God and Gideon prevails."
What richness in the texts; what range of choice!
The lesson must be plain to all, nor hid,
So let all speak and not equivocate.

I'd have them use the Book of Joshua.
It's full of meat as honeycomb of sweets,
Telling of Hittite feuds, of Amorites,
Amalekites at bay, then smitten sore,
Leaves nothing out that justifies our ways;
The sack of Ai and haughty Jericho,
Of Gibeon and Hebron in the South;
Of Jericho, whose walls fell prone, nor rose,
Of Gibeon, whose kings fell in their pride
And all the country far and wide laid waste,
Makkedah, Debir, Hazor, in the plains,
The plains of Chinneroth and Gezer, too,
Lachish and Eglon, Libnah by the sword,
The sword of him who stayed the setting sun
And held the wandering moon o'er Ajalon,
The sign and symbol of his victory,
Who fought the foes of God as I have done
And by His favor smote them hip and thigh
From Gaza unto Goshen, nor did rest
Till one-and-thirty kings were in the toils,
Caught in the snare and hanged at fall of night,
Upon the one-and-thirty gibbets hanged,
Then thrown at evening, such the common lot,
In carrion pit, all utterly destroyed
And those who followed stricken to a man,
Nor spared the youth, nor women, babe at breast,
Who knew, as God smiled on his handiwork,
In sooth, His peace, the peace of Joshua:
His peace, in truth, the only peace for me.
I'll have this preached within the Dom, proclaimed
From all the pulpits throughout all the realm,
That Joshua's peace is our own holy peace,

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

The peace of Joshua, the son of Nunn,
The peace that's by the sword and of the sword,
And for the sword, a lasting peace that holds.
These worthies of the Bible knew their minds
And found their God a not unwilling aid,
As I, as I, the credit where it fits,—
To whom the credit's due, my people know,
So let us to the text and settle all;
I'll put the marker, so, to keep the place,
It lies in Chapter Ten, Verse Forty-two:
"And all the kings and all their utmost lands
Did Joshua take, take in his time, because
Jehovah fought for Israel——" Enough!
This is the text for me, the victory text,
And let the Pastors cry it everywhere,
The peace of Joshua, the son of Nunn,
Jehovah's peace, won by the sword alone,
A German peace and on our terms at last!

CODA

As the Kaiser lays down the Bible a look of intense satisfaction steals
over his face and his gratification is so great that, as he gazes again into the
Park, he hums the lines from the Lorelei as set to music by Liszt, not the
folk-song version of Silcher, and continues:

Die luft ist kuhl—es dunkelt—schnell; yah wohl,
I like the Abbe's setting, Yes, 'tis cool,
Und ruhig fliesst der Rhein, der deutsche Rhein,
Ah, German still because of our good sword,
Naught else buys peace and keeps it "fest und treu;"
Es dunkelt, schnell, I'll have the lights at once,
The evening's tranquil as when Goethe wrote
Upon the crystal pane, "O'er all the heights,"
Und uber allen Gipfeln ist Ruh, die Ruh!
"O'er all the heights there shines our German peace."
This Easter ecstasy is God's own way.
Und uber allen Gipfeln ist Ruh, die Ruh,
Die Ruh, die Ruh—What, who, who stalks within?
What khaki-clothed mummer is this man?
The lights! The lights! Es dunkelt, schnell, the lights!
A Chaplain with the Stars and Stripes, full pale,
His voice, his voice is of the sepulcher.
His words are of the burial liturgy,
Die Luft ist kuhl; I feel a sudden chill.

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

A text; a text for victory, his words.
What is this mummary, this Bible drip?
BLESSED ARE THEY WHO THIRST FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS
AND HUNGER FOR IT—THEY SHALL ALL BE FILLED.
He would berate me with beatitudes!
And quote the scriptures in contrariness
BLESSED ARE THEY INDEED; THE MEEK WITHAL,
THEY SHALL INHERIT—

Lo, what words are these
In stern monition from his ghastly lips?
BE NOT DECEIVED; GOD IS NOT MOCKED,
LO, WHATSOEVER YE SOW THAT SHALL YE REAP.
AND YE THAT DRAW THE SWORD AND STRIVE BY IT
SHALL PERISH BY THE SAME, FOR SO 'TIS WRIT.
The Hohenzollern way runs counter-wise,
The sword has been our stead for centuries.
VENGEANCE IS MINE, I SHALL REQUITE INDEED
AND SAVE YE NEITHER BY THE SWORD NOR SPEAR,
YEA, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN, HEAR
The words are gibberish as all men know.
The thing deciphered after the event,
A parable for those of kindly mind,
Kindlich not konigliche as our own.
THY DAYS ARE NUMBERED AND THE END IN SIGHT.
THY KINGDOM IS FOREVER LOST TO THEE
Old sayings, threadbare and without avail,
Repeated oft and so dilute and vain.
AND LO! THE BEAST WHOSE NAME WAS BLASPHEMY,
THE HORNED BEAST AND CROWNED WITH THE CROWN,
WHOSE POWER, THOUGH DRAGON-GIVEN, WAS NOT FORE'ER.
THY CROWN A RIM OF FIRE UPON THY HEAD,
A WRITHING SERPENT-CIRCLET, VENOM-FILLED!
Is this a dream, fatigue of war-tired brain,
Or daze from too much pondering o'er the texts?
I'll none of it!—Ah, faced, it disappears.
Who reads this riddle must himself be mad,
For Revelation lies 'neath Luther's ban
The canon is in doubt, the text not sure—
WHOSE NAME AND NUMBERS, SIX AND SIX AND SIX.
SET OUT THE MONSTER VOID OF HEART AND SOUL
A NAME A HISSING IN THE HALLS OF MEN,
A BYE-WORD SPAT WITH HORROR FROM THE LIPS.
What boots this anti-Nero haggada,
This Armageddon clatter of the beast,

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

This anti-Christ, this war of vials and seals.
I'll prove a Daniel in the judgment seat,
And read our primacy in every line,
For prophecy is certain when you know;
And Hebrew numerals arranged at will.
Spell Caesar or the village simpleton.
Still in my ears the voice, the form still seen.—
Gott, I have read too long—too long—my eyes!
This ringing in my ears—It darkens fast—
What, What; He cries again!

MEN SHALL DESIRE

AND SEEK FOR DEATH, SUCH IS THEIR WEIGHT OF SHAME,
AND KNOW THE TORTURES OF THE NETHER PIT,
THE SEVEN SEALS AND SEVEN MYSTERIES,
WEIGHED THOU OF GOD AND FOUND AT FAULT IN ALL,
THE CAIN OF RULERS, LIFE'S LONE ISHMAEL,
WHOSE HAND'S AGAINST A WORLD ENGULFED IN HATE
AND THEIRS AGAINST HIM.

Ah, not so, not so!

As God's my judge the sword was forced on me!
AND CAIN SLEW ABEL AND WAS CURSED OF GOD.
The brother's keeper cry once more is heard!
And Cain was but a weakling, not so I.
AND CAIN CRIED OUT, IN ANGUISH OF THE SOUL
MY PUNISHMENT IS MORE THAN I CAN BEAR.
THE WINE-PRESS OF THE WRATH OF GOD THY FATE;
THE WINE-PRESS THOU HAST FILLED TO RUNNING O'ER.—
TO RUNNING O'ER WITH BLOOD OF INNOCENCE,
WHOSE BLOOD CRIES, "VENGEANCE!" FROM THE TORTURED
EARTH!

LO, WHO OFFENDETH THESE OUR LITTLE ONES,
THE LITTLE ONES WHO PLAY ABOUT OUR FEET,
BEFORE ALL STANDS AS IF A MILLSTONE HANGED
ABOUT HIS NECK IN SHAMEFUL POLLORY.
Luft! Luft! The lights! The guards! I faint! The lights!
UPON THE IMPERIAL BROW THE BRAND OF CAIN,
BRANDED FORE'ER BEFORE A WORLD OF WOE,
IMPERIAL LEPER BY ALL EXECRATE.
BARABBAS ON THE CROSS WITH FATE DESERVED
AND JUDAS, WHO BETRAYED, KNEW FULL REMORSE.
THINK NOT THIS BITTER CUP SHALL PASS FROM THEE.
BEHOLD IT IN THY HAND; DRINK TO THE DREGS,
THE DREGS OF IGNOMINY, SURE DEFEAT!
FOREDOOMED, FOREDAMNED, AND ALL THY EVIL LINE,

JEHOVAH, GOD OF BATTLES, UP TO DATE

THY PUNISHMENT—

No, no—not so—the lights!

Luft—luft—I choke—I faint—es dunkelt, Ah—

The brand of Cain—of Cain—of Cain—fore'er—

Upon the Imperial brow the brand of Cain—

My punishment is greater—Ah—the dark—

Am ende—luft—the dark—the dark—the dark!!

Am ende, Gott, the dark is over all!

Falls heavily to the floor in a swoon.

Written February-March, 1918. Read before the Phi Beta Kappa,
University of Pennsylvania, May 1, 1918.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 018 395 553 6